



persistent and urgent
QUESTION IS,
“what are you doing for others?”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

MLK CELEBRATION

Presented by Peer Multicultural Educators

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2019

MAIN GYM · 11:25 AM - 12:30 PM

Welcome

Dr. José Torres,
President

IMSA CHOIR

“Lift Every Voice”

Spoken Word Poem

Cindy Lyles ‘02

IMSA Student Spoken Word Competition

“America To Me” Winners

Keynote Speaker

Dion Steele ‘89

Closing

Dr. Bob Hernandez,
Principal

[ABOUT OUR SPEAKERS]

CINDY LYLES

Class of 2002

Poet-scholar Cindy “Just Cindy” Reed is a native of East St. Louis and a doctoral candidate in the Department of American Studies at Saint Louis University.

As a scholar, Reed studies twentieth-century African American literature situated in cities, representations of black girls and women in American literature and multimedia texts, and the culture of East St. Louis. She seeks to understand how race, gender, class, and urban environments converge in black literature. She is a 2018 fellowship recipient of the Mellon Foundation’s Divided City Initiative through Washington University in St. Louis.

In the poetry world, Reed is known as “Just Cindy,” and her work has been featured in Denise Ward-Brown’s *Never Been a Time*, a 2017 documentary film that reframes the 1917 East St. Louis race riots. She also gave the inaugural reading at the Eugene B. Redmond Learning Center in Southern Illinois University Edwardsville’s Lovejoy Library in 2016. She is especially proud of her original poetry performed with the premiere black ballet company Collage Dance Collective in Memphis, TN, and Washington, D.C.

Reed’s creative and scholarly writings have been published in *I Am East St. Louis*, the Magazine and the online Project on the History of Black Writing. Her most recent academic publication, “From One First Lady to Another: The Speculative Worlds of Michelle Obama and *The Walking Dead*’s Michonne,” appears in the 2017/18 (Vol. 40.1) issue of *Women & Language*.



DION STEELE

Class of 1989

Dion Steele started working with disabled children in the Urbana- Champaign area before pursuing a Master’s Degree in Theology at University of Chicago. He was an advocate for men in transition before becoming a full-time History and Religious Studies instructor at Hales Franciscan High School, Chicago, IL.

After years in program development, educational operations and minority outreach Dion returned to his profession as a History Teacher and eventually History Department Chair at Urban Prep Charter Academy Englewood Campus. In 2010, Steele became the “Minister of Culture” at the University of Chicago Charter School, working to develop the school’s brand and culture.

He returned to Urban Prep Academies in 2013 and became the West Campus’ Assistant Principal. In 2015, he returned to lead Urban Prep’s Englewood Campus. As the Principal, Steele has worked effortlessly to ensure students are exceptional!

